

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization  
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date  
10 July 2003 (10.07.2003)

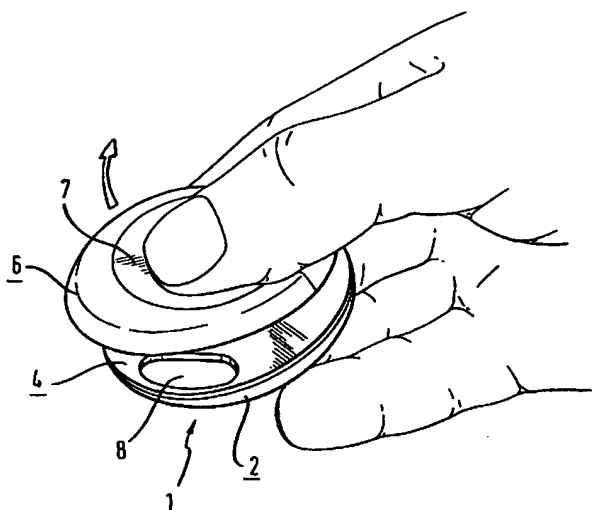
PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 03/055765 A1**

- (51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: **B65D 47/26**, 43/18, 47/14 (74) Agents: **HOFFMANN EITLE** et al.; Arabellastrasse 4, 81925 München (DE).
- (21) International Application Number: **PCT/EP03/00007** (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (22) International Filing Date: 2 January 2003 (02.01.2003)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:  
102 00 079.4 3 January 2002 (03.01.2002) DE
- (71) Applicants (*for all designated States except US*): **SORE-MARTEC S.A.** [BE/BE]; Drève de l'Arc-en-Ciel 102, B-6700 Arlon/Schoppach (BE). **FERRERO S.P.A.** [IT/IT]; Piazzale P. Ferrero 1, I-12100 Alba (Cuneo) (IT). **FERRERO OHG MBH** [DE/DE]; Hainer Weg 120, 60599 Frankfurt (DE).
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- (72) Inventor; and
- (75) Inventor/Applicant (*for US only*): **VAGLIANO, Enzo** [IT/DE]; An der Vogelhecke 5, 63263 Neu-Isenburg (DE). Published: — with international search report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: **SMALL CONTAINER**



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a small container 1 for storing and dispensing small doses of sweets, sweeteners, mints and the like, in particular dragees, said container comprising essentially a receiving body 2 and a lid 6 mounted pivotally on said receiving body 2, said receiving body 2 comprising a lid-side closure area 4 including at least in part an essentially flat portion in which at least one aperture 8 for dispensing the contents of said receiving body 2 is situated, and said essentially flat portion of said receiving body 2 being capable during the swiveling movement of said lid 6 of being uncovered at least in part by said lid 6 or of being brushed over for closing said at least one aperture 8, and said swiveling axis being arranged essentially perpendicularly to said flat portion. Such a small container can be easily handled as regards dispensation of its contents.

WO 03/055765 A1



---

*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

## Small Container

### Field of the Invention

The invention relates to a small container for storing and dispensing small doses of candy, sweets, sweeteners, mints or the like, in particular dragees, said container comprising essentially a receiving body and a lid pivotally mounted thereon.

### Background Art

Small or hand-held containers for storing and dispensing specific forms for the administration of pharmaceuticals or candy, sweets, sweeteners, mints or the like (hereinafter "sweets"), such as for example tablets, sweetener dragees and the like, are known. These generally comprise a receiving body in which the respective contents of the container are stored and a lid, with the aid of which the receiving body can be either opened or closed. In a variety of these known small containers, the lid must first be lifted and then removed from the receiving body so that the user can access the contents of the container. Saltshakers are likewise known which have at least one aperture at the top of a receiving body which can be uncovered or closed by means of a disk-shaped lid. The lid is mounted on the small container so as to be rotatable about a central axis, and also has an aperture. Rotating the lid causes the two apertures to be aligned. The contents of the saltshaker can be dispensed when both apertures are aligned.

This type of small container requires, however, that the user holds with one hand the receiving body thereof while positioning the lid with the other hand so as to permit access to the contents of the small container.

Summary

The invention is to provide a small container which can be easily opened and closed using one hand only.

This is attained in accordance with the invention by a small container having the features as set forth in claim 1.

It is possible with this solution to uncover the aperture provided in the lid-side closure area of the receiving body of the container by means of a simple single-handed operation, namely a relatively short pivoting movement of the lid. A subsequent tilting movement of the small container then allows the contents of the container to be dispensed. It is likewise possible in just as simple a manner to subsequently close the small container using one hand only, by pivoting the lid of the container back into its original position.

Preferred embodiments of the invention are described in dependent claims 2 to 23.

A preferred embodiment of the small container provides that the closure area of the receiving body disposed adjacent to the lid is formed by an intermediate part, preferably either configured as an integral part of the receiving body or attached to the receiving body as a part produced separately. Depending on the shape, size and contents of the receiving body of the container, it may be more economic to configure the closure area integrally with the receiving body, i.e. as a cast part, since this may help to reduce the manufacturing costs. However, to simplify filling of the receiving body, the closure area may preferably be produced as a separate intermediate part which is attached to the receiving body.

Preferably the lid is mounted relative to the receiving body pivotally on the receiving body such that the pivoting axis

lies outside the center of gravity of the inner surface of the lid arranged adjacent the closure area. A pivoting axis arranged in this manner facilitates swiveling of the lid since the surface brushed over by the swiveling movement of the lid is larger the greater the distance between the center of gravity of the surface and the pivoting axis. Thus, the aperture provided in the receiving body can be enlarged with unvarying lid size, by means of which the removal of the contents of the container is facilitated. Moreover, simple swiveling of the lid is possible by using the thumb if the small container is held with one hand and especially with some of the fingers of one hand.

Preferably the pivoting axis is formed by a protrusion provided in the closure area which protrudes into an aperture in the lid and is locked therewith. Preferably this protrusion is configured like a mushroom, said mushroom comprising centric slits permitting radial compression of the protrusion, which helps to ensure that the protrusion can be introduced into the aperture of the lid in a simple manner. After introduction of the mushroom-shaped protrusion into the aperture of the lid, the headpiece of the protrusion expands radially, which causes the protrusion to lock into place in the aperture. This locking prevents the lid from being inadvertently released from the receiving body. However, this type of locking still permits swiveling of the lid relative to the receiving body. The attachment of the lid to the receiving body is thus simplified.

To permit easier guidance of the swiveling movement of the lid relative to the receiving body and to enhance the stability of said swiveling movement while facilitating its limitation, a pin disposed at the inner side of the lid can protrude into an elongated hole formed in the closure area, said elongated hole being configured so as to be bent according to the radius of curvature of the swiveling movement of the lid.

The elongated hole formed in the closure area of the receiving body can include knobs which are resiliently deformable at at least one end and which shorten the width of the elongated hole, by means of which a locking of the lid in a position in which the lid closes the aperture of the receiving body is possible by means of the pin arranged at the inner side of the lid. Preferably both end portions of the elongated hole comprise such knobs, by means of which the lid can be locked in two positions in which the aperture of the receiving body is completely uncovered or closed by the lid.

In another preferred embodiment of the present invention, the closure area of the receiving body comprises two apertures disposed at two opposing sides thereof, with the lid being able to be swiveled such that the one or the other aperture can be uncovered by the lid according to its swiveling direction. Owing to the disposal of two apertures at opposing sides of the receiving body and the capability to swivel the lid in both directions, the container can be used in an advantageous manner in terms of ergonomics both with the right and the left hands.

If the small container is held with the index finger, the middle finger and, where necessary, also with the ring finger of the right hand, with the right-hand thumb resting on the top of the lid, it is possible in the previously described embodiments of the small container to swivel the lid in the clockwise direction, i.e. by releasing an aperture situated at the left-hand side of the thumb in the closure area of the receiving body. Simple tilting of the small container enables the dispensation of parts of the contents of the container. Owing to the limited freedom of movement of the left hand in the counterclockwise direction, the dispensation of the contents by using the left hand is difficult in a small container configured according to any of the previously described embodiments. Therefore, two apertures may be provided in a modified embodiment. In this case, the lid is

pivotable towards both sides of the receiving body such that the small container is also suitable for left-handers.

At least one part of the surface of the lid may be configured essentially flat. It may, however, preferably also include a recess dimensioned such that a user's thumb is in part receivable therein. The user of the small container puts his thumb into the recess and can thus easily swivel the lid aside. Preferably the surface of the lid may likewise be configured in a non-slip manner such that the user's thumb remains stationary on the lid during the swiveling movement. In both embodiments, the thumb is efficiently prevented from slipping.

In an embodiment of the invention developed even further, the entire small container is configured as an ellipsoid of revolution flattened on both sides, with the one flattened side corresponding to the outer surface of the lid, and the other flattened side corresponding to the outer surface of the bottom of the receiving body. Such an outer shape of the small container has a positive effect on the handling of the small container by simplifying its holding at least with the index and middle fingers while the thumb is simultaneously laid on the outer surface of the lid. The spherically bent outer shape of the container is likewise beneficial for its stowage in a trouser pocket.

Preferably the peripheral edge of the lid terminates flush with the peripheral edge of the closure area of the receiving body, which creates the impression of compactness and contributes moreover to the esthetic appearance of the small container.

To limit the swiveling range of the lid and thus to simplify handling of the small container, the closure area of the receiving body may comprise an elevation which forms at least an abutting edge for the inner side of the lid, with which

the lid is contiguous in its unswiveled and/or swiveled state.

In an advantageous manner, the lid is releasably lockable with the receiving body in the unswiveled and/or swiveled state. This is preferably achieved in that the elevation comprises lock catches at a side facing the aperture of the closure area, which engage with a resiliently bendable protrusion formed at the inner side of the lid and lying in a plane parallel to the swiveling plane, by means of which a locking of the lid in the swiveled and unswiveled states is possible. Locking the lid in the unswiveled state of the lid is particularly important to prevent the contents of the container from falling out during the transportation of the container.

Preferably the lid can be swiveled relative to the receiving body at an angle of between 30° and 40°. Since the lid is swiveled by means of the user's thumb, while the receiving body of the small container is being held by the index and middle fingers, the swiveling range of the lid is adapted to the freedom of movement of the thumb in the swiveling direction.

To facilitate the holding of the container in a cavity formed by the index and middle fingers and possibly by additionally using the ring finger, the side of the receiving body facing away from the lid is preferably configured convex and rounded.

#### Brief Description of the Figures

An example of the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which

Fig. 1 is an exploded view in perspective of a small container in accordance with a first preferred embodiment of the invention;



Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the small container according to Fig. 1, taken along the line II-II of Fig. 3;

Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view of the small container, taken in parallel to the plane of the swiveling movement of the lid in the closed state thereof;

Fig. 4: is a cross-sectional view of the small container, taken in parallel to the plane of the swiveling movement of the lid in the swiveled state thereof;

Fig. 5: is a perspective view of the small container held in the right hand of a user;

Fig. 6: is a top view of an intermediate part according to a second preferred embodiment of the invention, which shows said intermediate part with two dispensation apertures and a locking mechanism for locking the lid in the closed position;

Fig. 7: is a top view of an intermediate part according to a third preferred embodiment of the invention, which shows the intermediate part with one output aperture and an elongated hole formed therein into which a pin protrudes which is provided at the inner side of the lid for locking the lid in the closed and open positions.

#### Ways to Carry Out the Invention

The small, or hand-held container shown in Fig. 1 comprises a receiving body 2, an intermediate part 4 and a lid 6. The receiving body 2 serves to store the contents of the container, such as e.g. vitamin dragees or other small doses of sweets. The intermediate part 4 is attached to the side of the receiving body 2 shown as open in Fig. 1.

The lid 6 is connected to the intermediate part 4 by introducing a pivotal peg 16, configured mushroom-like, into an aperture 18 provided in the lid 6 and locking it with said lid. The pivotal peg 16 comprises centric slits which enable radial compression of the head portion of the pivotal peg 16. On introducing the protrusion 16 into the aperture 18, the head portion of the pivotal peg 16 is radially compressed and passed through the aperture 18 thus far that the lid 6 is locked with the pivotal peg 16 of the intermediate part 4. The height of the cylindrical portion of the pivotal peg 16 corresponds roughly to the thickness of the flat portion, i.e. the flat surface 7, of the lid 6. In the state in which the lid 6 is locked with the intermediate part 4, the lid 6 thus remains pivotally connected to the intermediate part 4.

The intermediate part 4 further comprises an aperture 8 for dispensing the contents of the container. Said aperture is preferably arranged within the area of the peripheral edge of the intermediate part 4. The intermediate part 4 moreover includes an elevation 10, the function of which will be described in connection with the description of Figs. 3 and 4. The elevation 10 has two lock catches 12, 14 at the left-hand side of Fig. 1. The elevation 10 is arranged diametrically and eccentrically on the intermediate part 4.

The lid 6 comprises a centrically arranged, flat portion 7 which is followed by a convex marginal area, whose radially outer circumference corresponds essentially to the circumference of the intermediate part 4 and the circumference of the upper, open side of the receiving body 2. The convex portion of the lid 6 has a section 20, at the diametrically inner side of which a locking protrusion 22 is formed, preferably in a corner area of the section 20. The bottom side of the section 20 facing the intermediate part 4 is configured flat and terminates essentially flush with the marginal edges of the lid so that the entire lower edge of the lid and the section 20 lie in one plane. Thus, the

section 20 closes the aperture 8 so that the contents cannot access the cavity within the lid 6 in the closed state thereof.

Fig. 2 clearly shows how the intermediate part 4 is mounted on the receiving body 2. The receiving body 2 comprises an undercut 24 which extends at least in part along the circumference of the receiving body 2 and is distanced from the upper edge of the receiving body in Fig. 2 and into which at least some of the radially outwardly facing locking portions of the intermediate part 4 engage. Due to this type of engagement, the intermediate part 4 can be easily and quickly connected to the receiving body 2.

It is also clearly shown how the lid 6 is pivotally connected to the intermediate part 4. The pivotal peg 16 configured mushroom-like protrudes into the aperture 18 provided in the lid 6 and is locked with said lid by means of the radially shifting head portion of the pivotal peg 16, thus enabling the pivotal connection of the lid 6 with the intermediate part 4. In this arrangement, the head portion of the pivotal peg 16 is completely housed in the receiving aperture 18 of the lid 6. This kind of connection permits a simple swiveling of the lid relative to the intermediate part 4, while preventing the lid 6 from being unintentionally released from the intermediate part 4.

As can be seen in Fig. 2, the height of the elevation 10 provided on the intermediate part 4 corresponds roughly to the inner, free height of the lid 6, where said lid is flat and remains pivotable within limits. It will be explained in connection with the description of Fig. 5 why such an elevation, which reaches almost to the bottom side of the lid, is especially advantageous.

The left-hand side of Fig. 2 shows the aperture 8 for dispensing the contents of the container. As regards the outer shape of the small container, it remains to be

mentioned that the small container has approximately the shape of an ellipsoid of revolution flattened on both sides, which is advantageous in particular with regard to handling the small container. The ergonomically designed outer shape of the small container likewise creates the impression of compactness. This impression is increased in that the edge of the lid terminates flush with the peripheral edge of the intermediate part and further with the peripheral edge of the receiving body. There are thus no protrusions on the outer surface of the container which would be a hindrance in stowing or handling the container.

Figs. 3 and 4 are a cross-sectional view of the small container, taken in parallel to the swiveling plane of the lid, with Fig. 3 showing the lid in its closed position and Fig. 4 showing the lid in its open position. In Figs. 3 and 4, the lid is illustrated by means of a drawn-through line, whereas the intermediate part is indicated at least in part by dashed lines. Figs. 3 and 4 are so-to-speak top views of the lid 6 of the small container 1.

In the closed state of the lid 6 (see Fig. 3), a portion of the inner side of the convex portion of the lid 6 is contiguous with the upper portion as shown in Fig. 3 of the upper side surface of the elevation 10. Preferably a pin 29, which is arranged on the inner side of the lid and which extends essentially perpendicularly to the plane of the intermediate part 4, protrudes into a circular recess 28 arranged in the upper right-hand corner area of the elevation 10 in Fig. 3. The engagement of this pin 29 in the circular recess 28 of the elevation 10 forms in this manner, if necessary, a supplementary stop in the closed position of the lid.

In this closed position, the locking protrusion 22 is contiguous with an edge of the lock catch 14, thereby ensuring the locking of the lid 4 in the closed state. The locking protrusion 22 is preferably made of a resiliently

deformable material, so that during the swiveling of the lid in the direction of the open position, this locking protrusion 22 is resiliently deformed to overcome the resistance created by the lock catch 14 in the locked position. The force exerted by the lock catch 14 on the locking protrusion 22 should be sufficient to keep the lid in the closed position during transportation or stowage e.g. in the pocket of a jacket or trousers. It can also be seen in Fig. 3 how the portion 20 essentially closes the aperture 8 in the closed state of the lid in an area of the convex portion of the lid 6. This is necessary since the inner side of the lid facing the aperture 8 is configured so as to be bent, by means of which a volume is generated between the inner side of the lid and the intermediate part into which a part of the contents of the container might fall even in the closed state of the lid. Unintentional emptying of the contents of the container held in the receiving body 2 is prevented due to the surface to surface coverage of the aperture 8 by the portion 20 at the inner side of the lid.

Shown in Fig. 4 is a cross-section of the small container 1, with the lid 6 being in the open position. In the open position, the locking protrusion 22 is contiguous with an edge of the lock catch 12, while an area of a side surface 26 of the elevation 10 is simultaneously contiguous with the inner side of the lid as illustrated at the bottom of Fig. 4. The contiguous position of the side surface 26 against an area of the inner side of the lid limits the swiveling movement of the lid and thus determines the maximum swiveling range of the lid. As is merely indicated in Fig. 4, a pin disposed at the inner side of the lid and extending perpendicularly to the plane of the intermediate part 4 could just as well protrude into a circular recess in the bottom right corner area as illustrated in Fig. 4. This would be another conceivable possibility to limit the swiveling range of the lid.

In the open position of the lid, the aperture 8 is essentially completely uncovered by the lid so that emptying the contents of the container is possible. The greater the distance between the swiveling axis formed by the locking of the pivotal peg 16 in the aperture 18 provided in the lid 6 and the center of gravity of the surface of the inner side of the lid, the larger the area of the intermediate part 4 brushed over by the swiveling movement of the lid 6. Depending on the size of the surface brushed over by the swiveling movement of the lid, an aperture 8 of correspondingly larger dimensions can be formed in the intermediate part 4, which facilitates the removal from and/or filling of the receiving body 2 with the contents of the container. With regard to Fig. 4 it should be noted that the angle about which the lid can be swiveled lies preferably in the range of between 30° and 40°.

As regards Fig. 5, it illustrates the small container as held in a user's right hand. The bottom side of the small container rests thereby on the index and middle fingers, possibly also with the aid of the ring finger, while the right-hand thumb is simultaneously positioned on the flat top 7 of the lid of the small container. A simple movement of the thumb in the direction as indicated by the arrow causes the lid 6 to be swiveled into the open position. The user then tilts his right hand in the counterclockwise direction in order to remove a part of the contents of the container. As is optimally apparent from Fig. 5, the aperture 8 in the intermediate part 4 is completely uncovered in the swiveled position of the lid of the container.

Due to the ergonomically adapted outer shape of the small container, the latter optimally conforms to the shape of the hand, which positively contributes to the user-friendliness and handling of the small container.

As already mentioned with regard to the description of Fig. 2, the user necessarily exerts a certain force

perpendicularly to the flat top 7 of the lid, which could possibly lead to a deformation of the outer shape of the lid, which is, however, in turn efficiently prevented in that the height of the elevation 10 situated beneath the lid corresponds approximately to the depth of the lid. If the force exerted by the user on the lid were to exceed a specific limit which is essentially determined by the material of the lid, the inner side of the lid would be contiguous with the outer surface of the elevation, which prevents deformation of the outer shape of the lid. It should be noted in this regard that all of the components of the small container are preferably made of plastic.

Fig. 6 illustrates a second embodiment of the intermediate part 4 of the small container 1. In this embodiment, the intermediate part 4 comprises two apertures 8, 9 for dispensing the contents of the container. Also shown is an elevation 11 on the lid-side top of the intermediate part 4. The lid used in this embodiment may be configured similarly to the lid of the first embodiment. The only difference is that in the closed position of the lid, the locking protrusion 30 provided on the inner side of the lid is locked in this case with a lock catch 13 disposed on the elevation 11. Thus, the locking of the lid is only efficient in the closed position of the lid. In this embodiment, the section 20 formed at the inner side of the lid (see Fig. 1) should seal both apertures 8, 9 in the closed position of the lid. Thereby, the small container can be handled both with the left as well as with the right hand in the simple manner as described above.

Fig. 7 illustrates a further embodiment of the intermediate part 4. In this embodiment, there is again provided only one aperture 8 for dispensing the contents of the container. In this embodiment, the intermediate part 4 includes one elongated hole 34 with circular end portions 36, 38. Resiliently deformable knobs which shorten the width of the elongated hole are provided at both end portions 36, 38. A

pin 32 provided on the inner side of the lid and locked by knobs 40 in both end-side positions of the elongated hole 34 protrudes into the elongated hole 34. When the pin 32 is situated in the lower end portion 38 of the elongated hole 34 as shown in Fig. 7, the lid 6 is locked in the closed position by the intermediate part 4. When the pin 32 is, however, situated in the upper end portion 36 as shown in Fig. 7, the lid 6 is locked in the open position by the intermediate part 4. The knobs 40 are produced of a resiliently deformable material, similarly to the locking protrusion 22 of the embodiment as shown in Fig. 1.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the invention is not limited to a small container composed of a receiving body 2, an intermediate part 4 and a lid 6. It is perfectly conceivable that the intermediate part 4 is configured integrally with the receiving body 2, e.g. as a cast part. It should also be added that the flat top 7 of the lid is well suited for labeling purposes, for providing the user with information regarding the contents of the container. Such a label can also serve to cover the pivotal peg 16 and the aperture 18. Furthermore, the small container is not limited to the outer shape as illustrated in the Figures but can assume any optional shape.



Claims

1. A small container (1) for storing and dispensing small doses of sweets, sweeteners, mints and the like, in particular dragees, said container comprising essentially a receiving body (2) and a lid (6) pivotally mounted on said receiving body (2), said receiving body (2) comprising a lid-side closure area (4) including at least in part an essentially flat portion in which is situated at least one aperture (8) for dispensing the contents of said receiving body (2), and said essentially flat portion of said receiving body (2) being capable of being brushed over by said lid (6) during the swiveling movement thereof to uncover at least in part, or to close, said at least one aperture (8), and the swiveling axis being arranged essentially perpendicularly to said flat portion.
2. The small container as set forth in claim 1, characterized in that the closure area of the receiving body is formed by an intermediate part (4).
3. The small container as set forth in claim 2, characterized in that the intermediate part is an integral part of said receiving body (2).
4. The small container as set forth in claim 2, characterized in that said intermediate part (4) is attached to said receiving body (2) as a separately produced part.
5. The small container as set forth in any of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the swiveling axis about which said lid (6) is pivotable relative to said receiving body (2) is situated outside a center of gravity of an inner surface of the lid adjacent said closure area (4).

6. The small container as set forth in any of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the swiveling axis is formed by a protrusion (16) provided in said closure area (4), said protrusion (16) protruding into an aperture (18) provided in the lid and being locked therewith while permitting swiveling of said lid (6).
7. The small container as set forth in claim 6, characterized in that said protrusion (16) is configured mushroom-like, with its radial dimension being modifiable by centric slits, by means of which said protrusion (16) provided in said closure area (4) is insertable and lockable in said aperture (18) of said lid (6) by way of resilient deformation.
8. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the inner side of said lid (6) adjacent said closure portion (4) comprises a pin (32) protruding into an elongated hole (34) formed in said closure portion (4), with said elongated hole (34) being formed so as to be bent according to the radius of curvature of the swiveling movement of said lid (6).
9. The small container as set forth in claim 8, characterized in that said elongated hole (34) comprises knobs (40) which are resiliently deformable at at least one end and which shorten the width of said elongated hole (34), by means of which said pin (32) can be immobilized in a position in which said lid (6) closes said aperture (8) provided in said flat portion (4).
10. The small container as set forth in claim 8, characterized in that said elongated hole (34) comprises knobs (40) which are resiliently deformable at both ends (36, 38) and which shorten the width of said elongated hole (34), by means of which said pin (32) can be immobilized in positions in which said lid (6) uncovers

or closes said aperture (8) provided in said flat portion.

11. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that two apertures (8, 9) arranged on two opposite sides of said closure portion (4) are provided and in that said lid (6) is pivotable such that the one (8) or the other (9) aperture is uncoverable by said lid (6), depending on the swiveling direction of said lid (6).
12. The small container as set forth in claims 8 and 11, characterized in that said elongated hole (34) comprises knobs (40) which shorten the width of said elongated hole (34) at both ends (36, 38) and/or at a middle portion thereof, by means of which said pin (32) can be immobilized in both end-side positions (36, 38) and/or in a middle position of said elongated hole (34), in which said lid (6) uncovers one of said two apertures (8, 9) provided in said flat portion or closes both apertures (8, 9), according to the position of said pin (32) in said elongated hole (34).
13. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the outer surface (7) of said lid (6) is configured essentially flat.
14. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said outer surface (7) of said lid (6) comprises a recess dimensioned such that the thumb of a user of the container is receivable therein at least in part.
15. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said outer surface (7) of said lid (6) is configured in a non-slip manner such that during swiveling movement of said lid

- (6) by means of a user's thumb the latter remains stationary on said outer surface (7) of said lid (6).
16. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the small container has essentially the shape of an ellipsoid of revolution flattened on both sides, with the one flattened side corresponding to said outer surface (7) of said lid (6), and the other flattened side of said outer surface corresponding to the bottom side (3) of said receiving body (2).
  17. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that one peripheral edge of said lid (6) terminates flush with a peripheral edge of said closure area (4).
  18. The small container as set forth in at least one of claims 1 to 17, characterized in that said closure area (4) comprises an elevation (10) which forms at least one abutting edge (26) for said lid (6), with which said lid (6) is contiguous in its unswiveled and/or swiveled state.
  19. The small container as set forth in claim 18, characterized in that said lid (6) is lockable in the unswiveled and/or swiveled position.
  20. The small container as set forth in claim 18, characterized in that said elevation (10) comprises lock catches (12, 14) cooperating with a locking protrusion (22) provided at the inner side of the lid and extending in a plane parallel to the swiveling plane, by means of which a locking of said lid (6) in the unswiveled and/or swiveled state is possible.
  21. The small container as set forth in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that an angle about which the

lid can be swiveled relative to said receiving body (2) lies in a range of between 30° and 40°.

22. The small container as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the at least one aperture (8) is completely uncoverable during the swiveling movement of said lid (6).
23. The small container as set forth in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that said side (3) of said receiving body (2) facing away from said lid (6) is configured convex and rounded.

Fig. 1

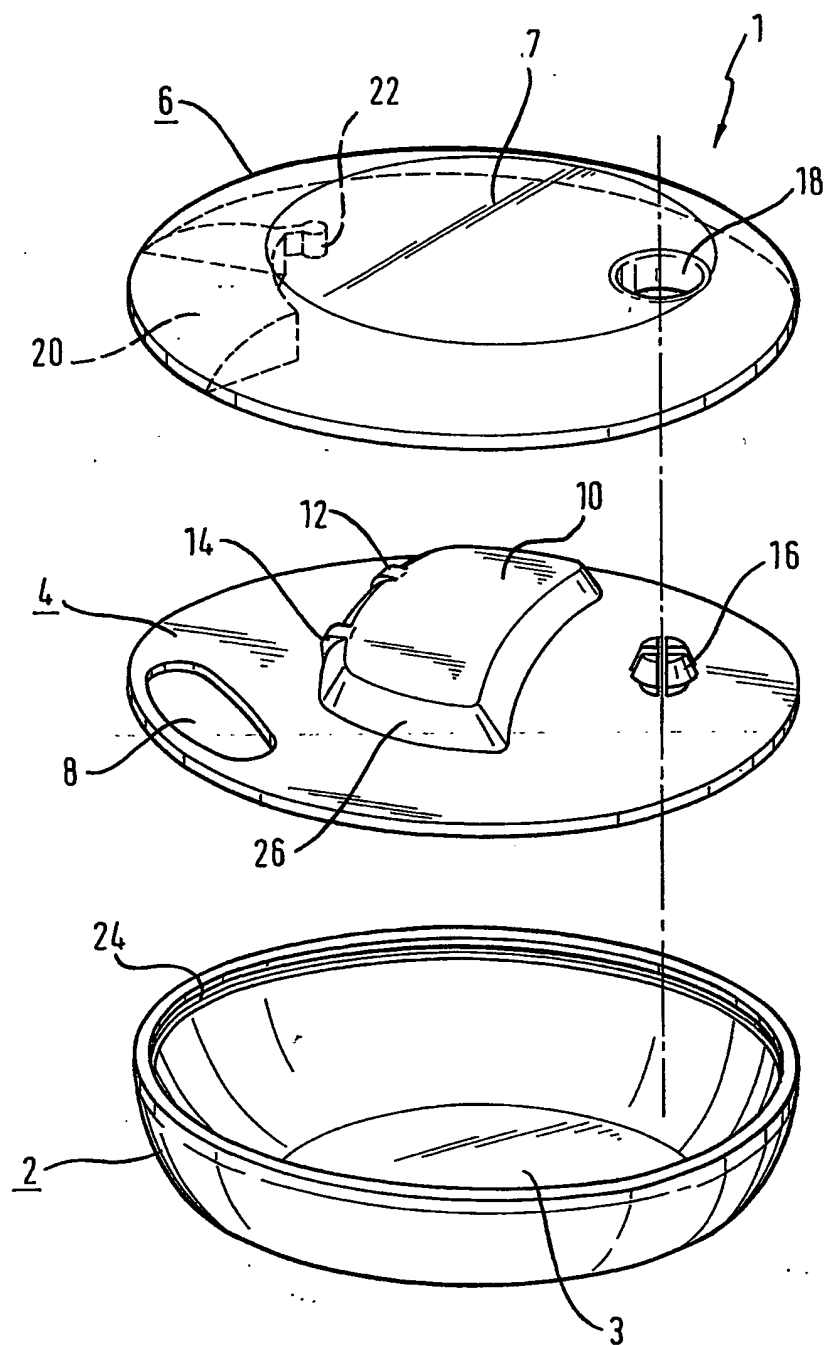


Fig. 2

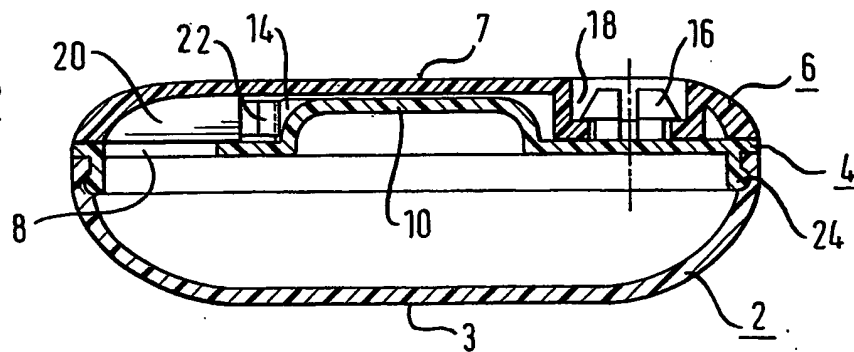


Fig. 3

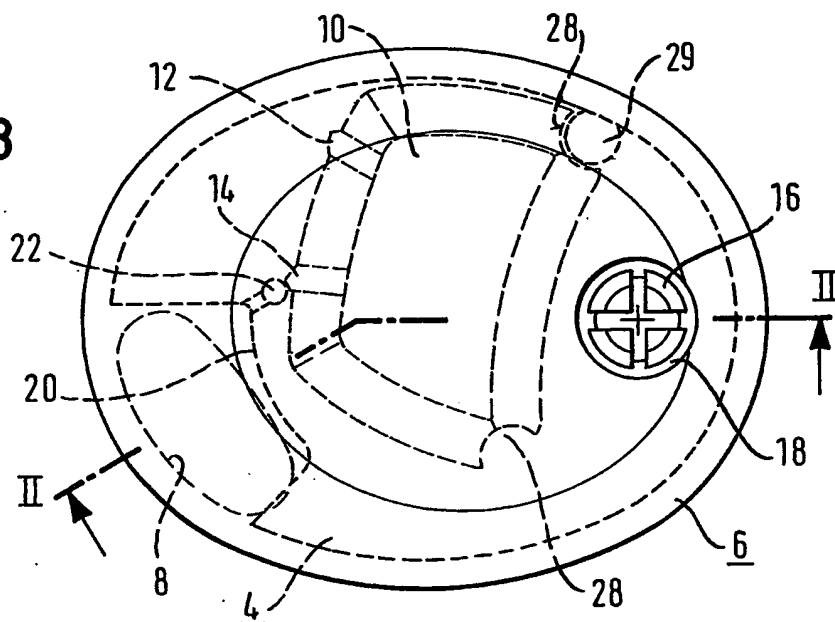


Fig. 4

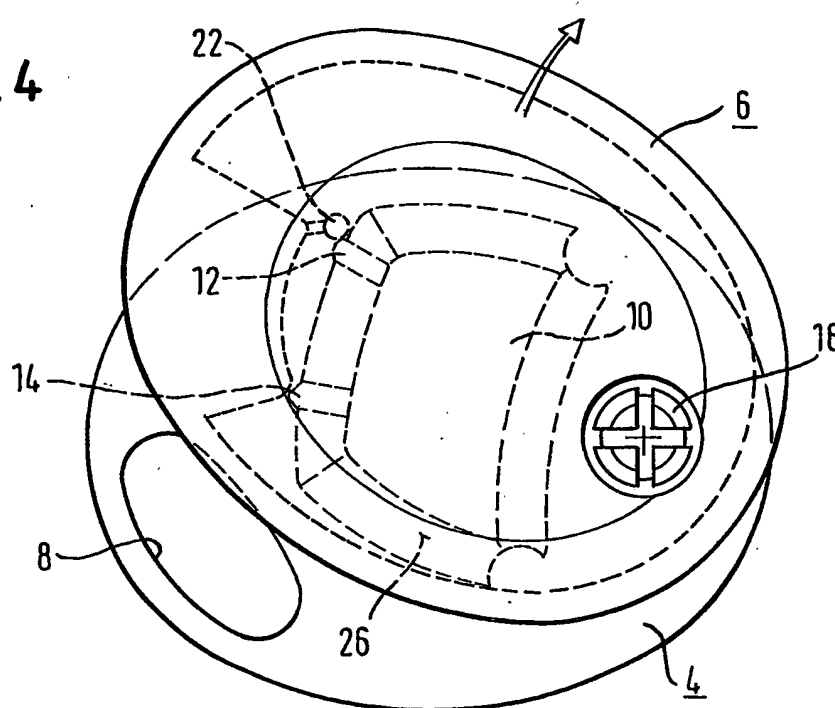


Fig. 5

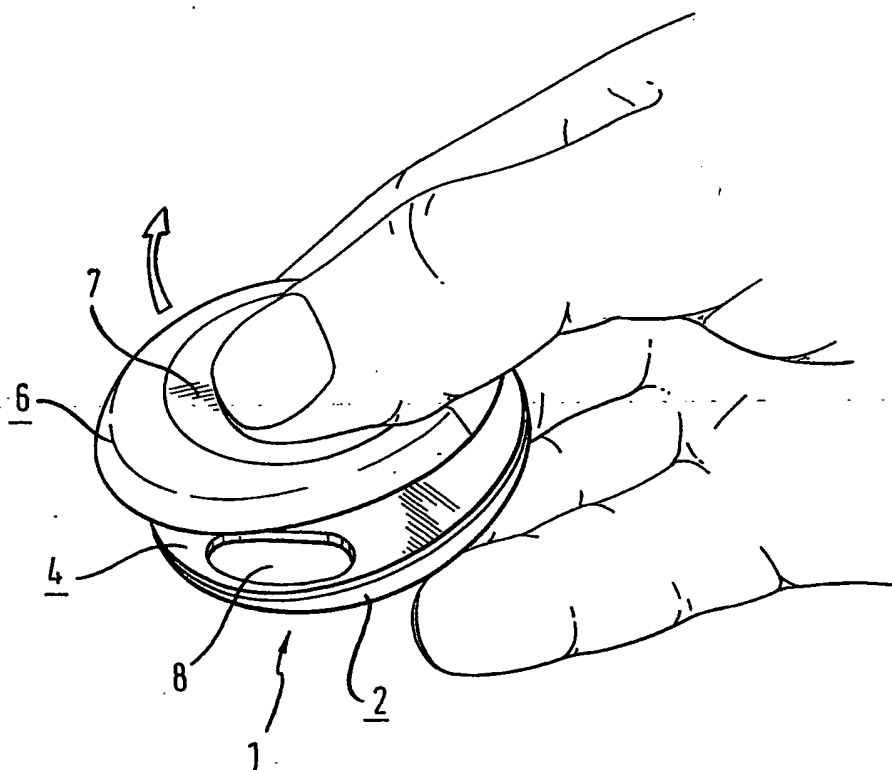




Fig. 6

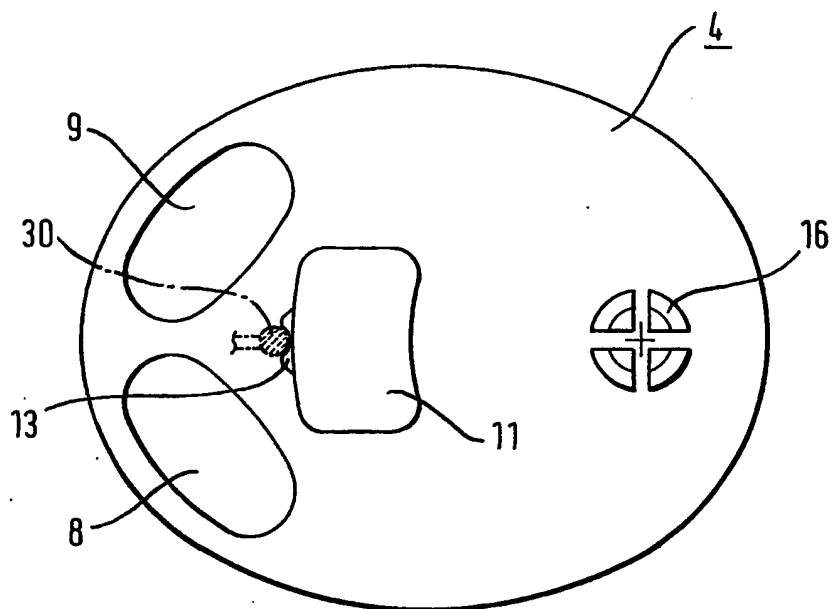
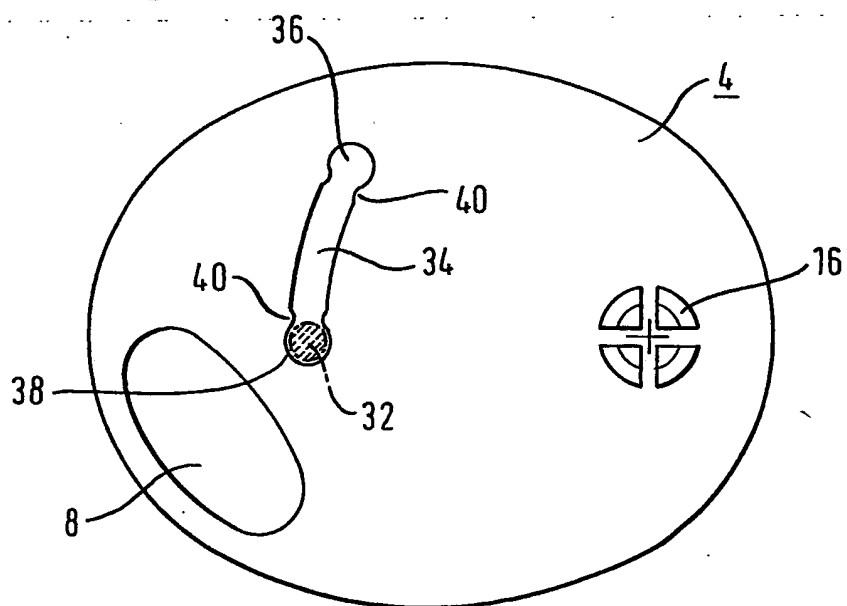


Fig. 7



# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP 03/00007

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 B65D47/26 B65D43/18 B65D47/14

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 B65D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

PAJ, EPO-Internal

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4 690 300 A (WOODS DAVID E) 1 September 1987 (1987-09-01) the whole document	1,2,4,13
A	GB 2 346 365 A (RPC CONTAINERS LTD) 9 August 2000 (2000-08-09) the whole document	1
A	GB 2 300 854 A (JENNINGS MARK RICHARD) 20 November 1996 (1996-11-20) figure 5A	1
A	GB 475 657 A (THOMAS HENRY BRADBURY;PHILLIPS TELESCOPIC TAPS LTD) 23 November 1937 (1937-11-23) figures	1
	-/-	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

### \* Special categories of cited documents:

- \*A\* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- \*E\* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- \*L\* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- \*O\* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- \*P\* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- \*T\* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- \*X\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- \*Y\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- \*G\* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

4 Apr11 2003

Date of mailing of the international search report

14/04/2003

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2  
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,  
Fax. (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Fournier, J

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP 03/00007

## C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	FR 2 746 770 A (GOBILLON CHRISTIAN) 3 October 1997 (1997-10-03) figures	1
A	FR 733 971 A (BERLIN CHARLES E) 14 October 1932 (1932-10-14) figures	1

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/EP 03/00007

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 4690300	A	01-09-1987	NONE
GB 2346365	A	09-08-2000	NONE
GB 2300854	A	20-11-1996	NONE
GB 475657	A	23-11-1937	NONE
FR 2746770	A	03-10-1997	FR 2746770 A1 03-10-1997 FR 2746771 A1 03-10-1997
FR 733971	A	14-10-1932	NONE